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## Heart Disease / Cardiology



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## Restenosis

Heart Disease/Cardiology Blog

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**August 27, 2004**

### Restenosis

**Restenosis** - the re-narrowing of a coronary artery after it has been treated with angioplasty or stenting - remains a major problem to patients and their doctors. Read about **restenosis** and what is being done about it [here](#).

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Procedures

## Coronary Artery Bypass Graft

Head

Surgery to improve blood flow to the heart

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Neck

Chest

**Coronary artery bypass graft (CABG)** surgery is an operation designed to detour blood around a narrowed segment of a heart artery in an effort restore blood flow to the heart muscle. Usually a vein **graft** from the leg is used for the **bypass** however other vessels may be used for the **graft**. The surgery can eliminate chest pain, improve exercise capability and lengthen life.

Abdomen

Pelvis

Back

### Anatomy and Physiology

Limbs

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- The heart is a muscular organ about the size of a clenched fist
- It lies in the chest beneath the sternum or breastbone. The function of the heart is to supply blood to the body
- The heart is divided into four chambers, two upper chambers called the right and left atria and two lower chambers called the right and left ventricles (Figures 1A,B,C)
- The left ventricle of the heart pumps blood through the aortic valve into the aorta, the largest artery of the body, and then through a network of arteries to the whole body
- The heart valves control the direction of flow of blood through the heart. After passing through the tissues of the body, the blood collects into the veins and returns to the right atrium
- Blood then passes through the tricuspid valve into the right ventricle. The right ventricle pumps the blood through the pulmonary valve into the arteries of the lungs where the blood picks up oxygen and gives up carbon dioxide
- The oxygenated blood returns to the left atrium after which it passes through the mitral valve to the left ventricle and the cycle repeats
- Like all tissues in the body, the heart requires oxygen filled blood in order to function
- Blood nourishes the heart through the right and left coronary arteries

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1. The left main **coronary artery** gives off two major branches, the circumflex and left anterior descending artery (Figure 2)
2. The right **coronary artery** gives off the marginal artery before it continues as the posterior descending artery (Figure 3)

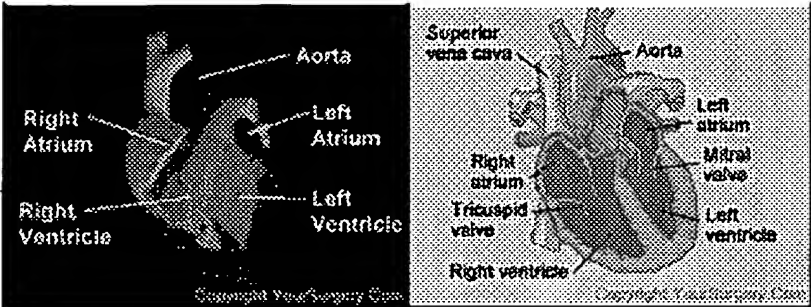


Figure 1a - The heart viewed from in front showing the position of the right and left atria and ventricles.

Figure 1b - Diagram of the atria, ventricles and valves of the heart with the heart muscle relaxed (diastole). The yellow arrows show the direction of blood flow through the valves

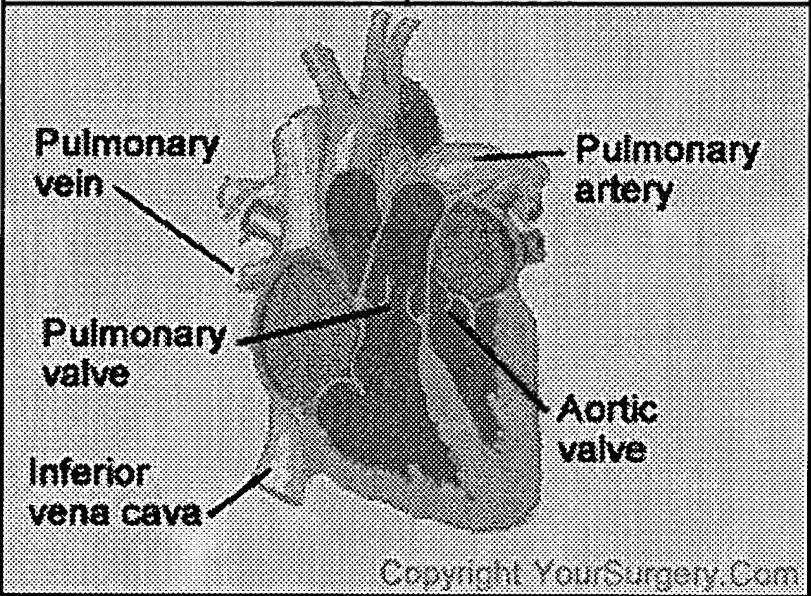


Figure 1c - Diagram of the heart during a contraction of the heart muscle (systole). The yellow arrows show the direction of blood flow through the valves

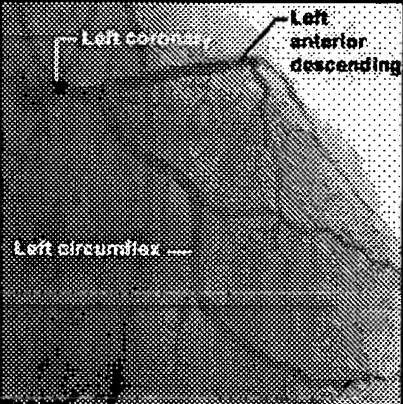


Figure 2 Angiogram of the left coronary artery. Courtesy K. Patel, MD

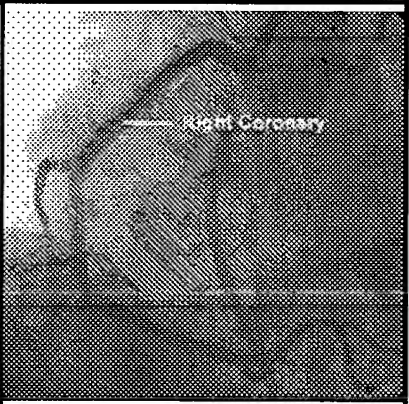


Figure 3 - Angiogram of the right coronary artery. Courtesy K. Patel, MD

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# Cardiology In Critical Care

## PTCA Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty

### What is PTCA?

*"Percutaneous" — through the skin*

*"Transluminal" — within the lumen or artery*

*"Coronary" — the artery which supplies the heart muscle*

*"Angioplasty" — remodeling the artery.*

PTCA (Angioplasty) is a mechanical fix to a biological problem. It can correct the immediate danger of blocked arteries.

The advantage of angioplasty over open heart surgery is that it is much less invasive and more repeatable if the disease advance necessitating the correction of more blockages.

### History of PTCA

Andreas Gruentzig a physician in Zurich Switzerland inserted a catheter into a patient's coronary artery and inflated a small balloon opening a blocking and restoring blood flow to a human heart. Over a millian angioplasties (PTCAs) are performed annually.

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